MOTHER EARTH

Vol. VIII. DECEMBER, 1913 No. 10

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Vol. VIII DECEMBER, 1913 No. 10

OF PRISONERS

By Grace Fallow Norton

My heart is breaking. O why can I not break yours?
My heart is breaking because of prisoners.
O the terrible walls of stone!
O the hours and the months and the days
And Despair!
We laugh; we go our ways,
And they wait in their cells alone.
The cells are of steel and stone.
They sit and stare,
They curse, they weep,
And their souls die.
(O ask not a soul to live without light!)
And we go our ways and work and sleep
And sing, and we see the sky
And count it a little thing and cry
"Keep them hid from our sight!"
For we deem they have done us a wrong.
For a wrong, O what is the price?
Alas, alas, what anguish will suffice?
And how long lasts the payment, how long?
O I dream at night of the iron doors
And my heart is breaking. Why can I not break yours?

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

THOSE who look upon government as a kind of social providence would do well to consider the attitude of the United States authorities toward the striking mail chauffeurs. They might then revise their views as to the advisability of government ownership of everything in sight.

Theoretically the government is the representative of the people, carrying out the will of the latter. But in practice the picture is different. The striking mail-wagon drivers, themselves part of the people, demand a living wage and a reduction in the driving scale, the present speed having proved a menace to the public. Are these demands against the interests of the people? By no means, especially when we consider that improved conditions of living in one trade or profession always tend to raise the general level of well-being. But what is the attitude of the Federal authorities toward the strikers? The government has organized a veritable campaign of persecution and hounding. Scores of men have been thrown into prison, and every attempt is made to paralyze the union by arresting its more active members. The authorities are even going to the length of manufacturing evidence of conspiracy against the strikers and charging them with plotting to dynamite the scab-manned mail wagons.

It looks as if the government is naively suggesting to the strikers more effective means of defending their interests. If the cat is to be punished innocently, she might as well enjoy the cream.

* * *

AS the year is nearing its end, the CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS is harvesting a rich crop of strikes. No sooner has the dispute between the Street Railway Company of that city and its employees been relegated to the limbo of the State Public Service Commission than the teamsters declared a strike. It is, of course, a bit hard on the team owners that their men should refuse to work at this most busy season that promises such fine returns for the employers. But, then, the workers are notoriously ungrateful; they are growing more insistent every

day; they even presume to dictate the terms upon which they will work. Worse yet; occasionally a man in high office actually encourages the rabble by upholding their right to a living wage. Thus the Mayor of Indianapolis, during the recent carmen's strike, refused to permit the police to shoot down the strikers. The good business men of Indianapolis, however, quickly made it plain to the Mayor that a man of his character is not fit to be in office. His successor, former City Comptroller Wallace, is of another stamp. He knows which way his bread is buttered. Accordingly, there is riot and bloodshed in Indianapolis, and the blood spilled is workers' blood.

It reminds one of the "disbelief in violence" so stoutly asserted by the labor leaders recently on trial in Indianapolis, charged with conspiring to carry explosives into the State. Those brave labor leaders, one and all, vehemently protested their execration against the workers resorting to violent methods. But why are those lovers of peace-at-any-cost-to-labor so silent in the face of the violent means used by capital?

The bold robber knights of Mammon deserve more respect than the cowardly labor fakirs. They at least do not mask their purpose behind the plea of peace. With them it is war to the knife against labor. They merely demand that their slaves stick to peaceful means; for themselves they openly resort to, and justify, violence.

And labor meekly continues to play the one-sided game.

* * *

AT the recent meeting of the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor was passed the resolution of the Machinists' Union that strikes may be called on a vote of 75 per cent. of the international unions, or two-thirds of the members involved. The resolution provides that no union can reach an agreement and send its men back to work until all of the unions involved have obtained a settlement.

"The passing of this amendment means united action," said William H. Johnston, president of the machinists. "It will mean that one union cannot remain at work when the others go out on strike."

The resolution is a signal victory for industrial unionism. But it is even more. It demonstrates that, in spite of the antiquated spirit dominating the American Federation of Labor and its reactionary leaders, a new light is dawning on the more progressive element. The rank and file is beginning to awaken to the value of solidarity; it is realizing that labor is one undivided whole, and that no part of it can thrive at the expense of the others.

We rejoice in this new consciousness permeating the A. F. of L. The Metal Workers have set a good example, and may the shameful day be soon past when one set of workers can scab upon another, both members of the same union. The victory of labor will be assured when the workers realize the common interests of the international proletariat whose motto is, complete emancipation from capitalism by the solidaric economic action of the united workers of the world.

* * *

THE State Department of Cuba, hearing that Ortie McManigal intended to come to that country, decided to deport him should he attempt to land.

It seems that Ortie, the Judas of the McNamaras, is too much even for the Cuban authorities. Surely there are pretty tough customers in Cuba, but even they could not stand the stench of a skunk like McManigal.

He is perfectly welcome, however, in the United States. Aye, our honorable citizens, a la Detective Burns and the authorities, are very proud of him and have generously rewarded him for his Judas services.

* * *

IT seems incredible that there should be found, in this twentieth century, defenders of the whipping post, one of the most cruel and barbarous modes of punishment, degrading the punisher even more than the punished.

Yet such is the fact; aye, in the very civilized and progressive free America. Not only are men whipped at the post in the State of Delaware, but an attempt to abolish this inhuman torture is met with denunciation on the part of the "enlightened" legislators, a la Representative Brockson of Delaware, and Mann, Republican Leader of the House.

That such men are pathologic degenerates, reversals to the troglodite type, there is no doubt. But that such brutes are given power to make laws for a country of almost one hundred million "freemen" is not very much to the credit of the intelligence of the sovereign American.

One wonders what horrible outrages may indefinitely be perpetrated by the powers that be, till the people will be roused to resentment and action. The American people pretend democracy and yet give silent consent to the acts on the part of its offiicial representatives that would shame a Hotentot.

In big things, as in little. Congress presumes, without the least authority, to present an expensive pearl necklace—paid for out of public funds—to the daughter of the President in honor of her consent to sleep with a certain man. Public announcement of such an intention on the part of a modest girl is in itself vulgar and indecent. Still more vulgar it is to "honor" the bedchamber occasion by wasting public funds without the knowledge or consent of the public. But no voice has been raised in protest against the indecency of either such unmaidenly public declarations or such disgraceful Congressional behavior. No wonder, then, that a people lacking all finer emotions and bereft of all dignity and shame, raise no finger in protest against the fiendish inhumanity of the whipping post.

* * *

THE farce of the Christian lie that Christ brought peace on earth and good will to all is strikingly demonstrated this year by the renewed activities of the despoilers of the earth to prepare for war and destruction.

And our good Christian, peace-loving press rejoices in the news that an American officer has invented a gun so powerful and deadly that it will revolutionize war. The Christian purpose of the new weapon is, in the words of the inventor, to enable "flocks of swift, light-armored aeroplanes, each mounting one or two of the new guns, to swoop down on the enemy with a deadly hail of fire." The new gun, to be carried by an infantryman, is capable of firing 500 to 800 rounds a minute.

Think what that means! A single company of soldiers will, by means of the new Lewis gun, have a destructive power equal to a whole regiment at present. Wonderful human achievement. But, then, who speaks of humanity in our cutthroat system of wholesale murder. Who but those that lull the workers to sleep with soft words of good will and peace, though full well they know that war to the knife has ever been the Christian slogan.

It is therefore by no means surprising that a bill legalizing the organization of a body of 242,000 volunteers should quickly pass in Congress, giving the President the power to utilize this military force in addition to the regulars and the State militias in the event of hostilities.

Hostilities, indeed! The ruling class is evidently beginning to hear the murmur from below, and is preparing to "meet the situation." Therefore, new and deadly guns, and 242,000 volunteers. Therefore, schools for the military training of policemen and savage police dogs for the protection of the upper 400. Yet the old Christian lie will again and again be repeated for the 1914th time in every home and school and church, that Christ brought peace on earth and good will to all.

One might indeed despair but for the fact that the disinherited of the earth are beginning to see through this hideous falsehood, and that they, too, are preparing for the coming hostilities. The final encounter will be anything but peaceful, but it will be decisive.

* * *

BUT a short time ago the term sabotage had an exotic sound to the American worker. But so significant has this word now become that its very mention strikes terror to the hearts of the plutocrats and all political lickspittles, including those of the Social Democratic Party. On the other hand, to the workers Sabotage has become a bugle call, making them conscious of their economic power over their masters.

We therefore welcome the exposition on the value of sabotage by Walker C. Smith. In a popular and concise manner the author has presented the historic, philosophic and practical role of sabotage in a booklet that will prove of much use to every worker.

The pamphlet sells at ten cents a copy and can be obtained through MOTHER EARTH.

* * *

UNDER cover of constitutional forms, in the protective shadow of the Duma, the reaction in Russia has become even more irresponsible and brutal than before in its treatment of the political prisoners and exiles. Our comrades are being maltreated and tortured beyond human endurance. Suicides are numerous, and those fortunate enough to escape bring terrible echoes from the dungeons of the Bloody Tsar.

The Anarchist Red Cross has for years done good work in aiding, morally and financially, our suffering comrades in Russia and Siberia. But at this time the need is greatest. They call upon all friends and sympathizers to respond to the cry of Siberia by contributing to the Anarchist Red Cross funds and by helping to make a success the PRISONERS' BALL, to be given in aid of the political prisoners and exiles, on Saturday, January 3, at Harlem River Casino, 127th street and Second avenue, New York.

* * *

WE hope to meet our friends at the MOTHER EARTH Ball Wednesday, December 24, Christmas Eve. It is hardly necessary to assure those who attend our affairs that they will find there no preachment about peace on earth, good will to all, but, what is more vital in our days, joyous abandon and true comradeship.

⚜ ⚜ ⚜

THE AWAKENING STARVELINGS

BY ALEXANDER BERKMAN

IDEAS are true liberators. Ideas as distinguished from so-called reason. For in our work-a-day world there is much reason and too little thought. It is given only to the seer and poet to conceive liberating ideas—impractical, wild thoughts that ultimately light the way of practical, blind man to better and higher endeavor.

To "practical" minds the regeneration of the world is an empty dream. To transform the cold winter of

our age into the warmth of a beautiful summer day, to change our valley of tears and misery into a luxurious garden of joy is a vain phantasy lacking reason and sanity. But a William Morris sees in his mind's eye a world of comradeship and brotherhood rejoicing in the plenitude of earth's bounty, and he challenges "practical reason" to justify the existence of poverty and antagonisms in a society over-rich in all the physical and esthetic joys of a full human life.

The incisive genius of a Leonid Andreyev, with a bitter scorn born of intense love, lashes the exasperating helplessness of the great giant of labor, strong enough to support the whole world, yet too weak in spirit and thought to tear to pieces the flimsy network woven about him by the pigmies vampiring on his great body.

How pathetic the helplessness of the giant, mighty in everything save in liberating thought!

* * *

Ah, indeed, thoughts are not vain phantasies, ideas not an empty dream. Look about you. On every side is being enacted the terrible tragedy of Andreyev's "King Hunger." Labor feeds and clothes the world, while himself, poor Starveling, goes cold and hungry. The Masters of Life tremble in their palaces at the first rumor of their disaffected slaves. Their anxious ear catches the low murmur beneath their feet, the ominous rumbling down in the cellar of life; their faces blanch, and laughter is hushed in the mansions; the temples of Bacchanalian joy are deserted, and the bright chandeliers turned low, for fear the starvelings might see the light . . . and find their way to the palaces. . . .

And the Starvelings? They meekly crawl before the trembling masters, the powerful judges by grace of King Hunger, and plead mercy for stealing a five-pound loaf of bread. But the mighty judges know no mercy. The Starvelings are doomed to death. In despair they call to King Hunger, "Help us! Tell us what to do!"

"Revolt!" replies Hunger. "Take what is yours."

But how? In the council of the assembled Starvelings, conspiring plans of revolt, there is even greater poverty of thought and liberating ideas than of worldly goods.

Ah, the helplessness of the stomach, conscious only of its hunger!

Meek of spirit, poor in thought, the Starvelings again appeal to King Hunger for advice. But he is perfidious, serving with equal impartiality master and slave, ultimately deceiving both. For the despair of Hunger may flame forth in bloody revolt, but it needs the inspiration of the liberating idea to become conscious, triumphant revolution.

* * *

Revolts of hunger, inevitable as they often are, are failures in the larger social sense. But revolutions inspired by a liberating idea have always been successful to the degree of their inspiration. And the world progresses. Modern labor has learned the lesson of its past struggles. It is no longer satisfied with the crumbs thrown at it from the masters' heavy-laden tables. It voices its demand, ever more loudly and determinedly, for its full share of life. Over geographical boundaries rises the uprising of the Starvelings. It breaks down national lines, barriers of religion and caste, and sweeps the world with the revolt of the international proletariat. The Hindu coolie is awakening to the new spirit and defying the traditions of centuries by an organized uprising conscious of a higher aspiration. The industrial serfs of long-suffering Ireland are challenging their hereditary lords to open combat. The Russian peasant, sobered by the constitutional and parliamentary experiment, is gathering his forces for a more clarified and determined struggle with autocracy and capital. Throughout the world is to be sensed the approaching storm. It is no more the revolt of the Starvelings, blindly following King Hunger. It is the revolution of the international proletariat, daily more conscious of its universal brotherhood and of the unconquerable might of its solidaric unity in the war of labor for complete emancipation from the yoke of its masters.

ANARCHISM—The philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MEXICAN SITUATION

BY M. BAGINSKI

A GLANCE at Mexico, ravaged by greedy land speculators, governmental bandits and military pretenders, presents a very sad spectacle.

The population of the country is about 14,000,000, over 10,000,000 of which depend entirely upon the land for their means of existence. Industries are undeveloped, so that poverty in the country districts cannot be diverted into industrial centres of any importance. Besides, the Mexican agricultural worker—the peon—lacks freedom of movement. He cannot leave the land. He lives in such utter dependence and under such great tyranny on the part of the large land barons, that it is no exaggeration to say that his position is practically that of a slave. The Mexican peon is fettered to his misery by a refinedly cruel debtor system, that forces him—aye, even his descendants—to compulsory servitude to his land-owning creditors. For the peon cannot pay. How, indeed, is he to pay, he the eternal pauper, forever on the verge of starvation? The peon who tries to avoid this actual slavery by flight is hunted down by the authorities like some wild beast, and delivered in the hands of his brutal tormentors, to suffer a miserable fate, similar to the American black slave in the ante-bellum days, or even as still happens on many a southern plantation to this very day.

Less than one-fifth of the population of Mexico is of the white race. The rest consists of Indians and half-breeds. The land, which originally belonged to the Indian tribes, is fertile and rich in natural deposits—a circumstance that has aroused the greed of the commercial and industrial speculators of Europe and America. Mexican statecraft a la Diaz has pandered to this greed. The Mexican government established itself as the auctioneer of Mexico, its rich resources at the command of the highest bidder. The granting of a "concession" carried with it full permission to exploit the natives at the pleasure of the speculators. This policy opened up the country to the international Mammon

horde, whose sole interest in Mexico is measured by the amount of gold they can squeeze from that unfortunate land and its people.

The "noble" families of Mexico, and American, English and German promoters, have gone into partnership with the bandit government and ravaged the country to turn it into a mint to coin riches for themselves — tremendous fortunes used in part to corrupt officials, bribe the press and keep the dissatisfied people in subjection. State and capital, as is always the case, worked hand in glove, driving millions into despair and pauperism in order that a few privileged ones might gather untold booty.

Thus was the land of Mexico stolen from the people of Mexico. Aye, more: the government conducted a systematic war of extermination against the natives. In the name of progress and civilization it frequently organized military expeditions, on one pretext or another, but always for the obvious purpose of decimating the natives or driving them off the land in order to secure its possession. To this system of murder for robbery the Catholic Church has given its divine blessing and support. The chiefs of the various Mexican governmental hordes never troubled much over the question as to how the expropriated people should be reimbursed, or how they were to exist. They ravaged and robbed to fill their own coffers and those of the speculators, and when the people dared to question the justice of such proceedings, they were quieted with cannon and lead.

* * *

Out of these conditions, which practically remain the same till this very day, arose the Revolution in Mexico. "Land and Liberty" became the slogan of the rebels. All the yearnings and instincts of the people pointed toward a Social Revolution, but they were not sufficiently clear and strong to crystallize in a triumphant victory. The revolution remained, on the whole, in its several phases, enmeshed in the network of politics. What has manifested itself as the official Mexican revolution is a murderous fray about the political dictatorship that—under whatever name—will continue to de-

liver the land and the people into the hands of the greedy exploiters. Diaz, Madero, Huerta—the difference between their regimes is only that of degree and temperament. In their real essence they are identical, all flaunting the same motto on their bloody banner, Law and Order—the motto under the aegis of which the people are forever oppressed and robbed. Thus will also the newest rebel chief, Carranza—should he succeed, by aid of his plutocratic supporters, victoriously to enter Mexico City—issue his first governmental message to proclaim the sanctity of the new regime and to demand obedience to law and order, which means the continuation of the old unbearable social and economic slavery of the peons.

A dictatorship that will artfully hide the great poverty and misery of the Mexican people behind constitutional, parliamentary forms and "honest" elections—that is the great wish of all the powers interested in the robbery of the Mexican people. A regime that can establish in Mexico these playthings for grown-ups, so that Barbarous Mexico will be transformed into a real "civilized" nation in newspaper style, is sure to enjoy the approval and support of the international money powers. The latter are interested only in this, that the exploitation of the Mexican people be legalized and all governmental and capitalist outrages be conducted on the well-defined principles of established legal practice and usages, according to the efficient and orderly procedure of such democratic lands as the United States of America or of other constitutional countries.

This wish to legalize the robbery of the Mexican people, to clothe the vile deeds with the draperies of legal dignity, to make them respectable and honest, so to speak, is the keynote of the policy of the Washington administration. The good moral people are enthusiastic in their praise of President Wilson for his refusal to recognize Huerta because the latter grasped the reins of government by treachery and murder and is trying to retain his office by the same means. Huerta has offended against the decorum and ethics of constitutional statecraft, whose basis is pious sham and democratic hypocrisy. Had he succeeded to veil his villanies with

the mantle of constitutionality and parliamentarism, there would have been no offense to the moral feelings of our statesmen. Instead of being branded a bloody despot, Huerta would have then become famous as a great reformer and benefactor of Mexico. Is not, indeed, bloody Tsar Nicholas risen to the dignity of a "modern" ruler since the establishment of the Duma, which gives an appearance of constitutionality to the rankest Russian despotism that now wields its powers with even greater brutality than before, by means of the knout, the bastile and Siberian tortures?

The diplomatic exchange of notes between the dignified government at Washington and the despot of Mexico does not in the least touch the real question at issue, the vital problem of the Mexican people. It does not deal with their despair, misery and oppression. It treats only the question of political etiquette. Washington is about as "deeply concerned" in the destiny of the peon as in the fate of the negro who is lynched under the protection of the Stars and Stripes, or in the fate of striking American workingmen who are corralled and shot down by the Hessians of the American money bandits.

The pacification of the discontented and rebellious people will be possible only when the usurpers of that unfortunate country shall have been deprived of their stolen possessions and driven out of the country. But President Wilson no more dreams of that than Huerta. That the property of the national and international vampires, however gained, be legally protected, that is of more importance to him than the life and death struggle of an enslaved people. The American warships are not to be sent to Mexican waters to aid the great uprising of the people against their oppressors, but to protect the ill-gotten wealth of speculators against the just wrath of a long-suffering people. The Standard Oil interests are nearer to the heart of Washington than the fate of the poor Mexican peasant, whose position to-day is no more tolerable than that of the peasants of the feudal times, under the yoke of the robber knights, the nobility and the Church.

In Texas a number of Mexicans are languishing in

prison, arrested by the American government on the charge of smuggling ammunition across the border. They are facing the farce of a trial that may doom these brave men to long prison terms for having aided the struggle of their fellow countrymen to liberate Mexico. These men are treated by the American government as the worst criminals. Where revolutionists are concerned—as in the case of the Magoons and their comrades—the authorities at Washington are never at a loss what diplomatic means are to be applied. They are always to be found on the side of the vile horde in Mexico City that calls itself the Mexican government. Indeed, this love-peace attitude of Washington towards this horde is a source of much praise for President Wilson. But suppose that the miserable peons should gather in their hundred thousands, proclaim the social revolution and drive their blood-suckers and all political pretenders like swine into the sea—how quickly would the dove of peace take wing at Washington! For the "most sacred principles" wolud then be endangered. The events of the French Commune even might be repeated, when the generals of the Prussian army rushed to the rescue of their hereditary enemy, the provisional French government, to destroy the revolution.

The Mexican people have nothing to expect from the etiquette of diplomacy, be it that of despotism or of constitutional democracy. In their great struggle to break the chains of slavery they will receive no aid from the government either on this or that side of the Rio Grande. They will wrest Land and Liberty only through their own efforts of revolutionary activity. They have nothing to hope for from government, military chiefs, and political pretenders. Salvation rests with the people themselves.

APPEAL OF THE RANGEL-CLINE DEFENSE FUND

To All Friends of Justice:

Fourteen of our comrades lie in jail, at the mercy of what Texas calls her "Justice." She is notorious for racial prejudice, lynchings and other unspeakable bar-

barities, and she has moved against these poor workingmen, who were arrested September 13. One of them already has received a life sentence, and another—a mere lad—has been given twenty-five years!

They want to hang six others, because, in the endeavor to return to Mexico, a conflict arose in which a deputy-sheriff lost his life. They are silent over the fact that they themselves had first shot down and killed, in cold blood, the sentry these prisoners had appointed to guard their camp. They are silent over the fact that they shot down another fine young fellow and left him to die after hours of cruel agony, during which his pitiful appeals for water were brutally ignored. They are silent over the fact that two more of our comrades are believed to have been killed as the result of their attack, and that two others were wounded. All they know is that a Texas deputy-sheriff lost his life, and that their law, their Texas law, must have revenge.

Our comrades wanted only to get back to Mexico, that they might participate in the great struggle against Monopoly now raging there. They were attacked, their sentry being murdered. They disarmed their attackers and released them, getting in return what they believed to be a safe conduct which would insure them against further trouble. Then they were attacked again, with the result indicated above.

Being taken prisoners, our comrades were treated with inexpressible barbarity. They were run some fifteen miles, until they dropped exhausted and were dragged. They were tied hand and foot, and laid out in the burning sun while the question of lynching was debated. The newspapers, which have gloated over the sentences as likely to check the revolutionary sentiment beginning to manifest itself among those militant workers, the Mexicans, are silent on these all-important facts. They are clamoring for blood. The Mexican, in their estimation, is good only to labor in the cotton fields and furnish fees for constables and sheriffs.

They want to hang Charles Cline, because, as a member of the I. W. W., he dared to attack the Southern lumber lords.

They want to hang J. M. Rangel; and let us speak of Rangel. He has lived for years in Texas; a quiet, thoughtful man; always working on behalf of the oppressed and always holding his own, by sheer force of character, in a bitterly hostile community. There are white men in Texas, and even officials, who are not afraid to voice their admiration of Rangel. A man of unblemished integrity, of unquestionable courage, and of that non-invasive peaceful tendency which usually accompanies genuine courage.

To hang Rangel is to hang another John Brown, and well might prove another Harper's Ferry.

To hang, or imprison for life, our other comrades, whose real crime is devotion to the poor and disinherited, is to repeat the legal butchery that followed the Haymarket tragedy, in Chicago.

We must prevent that, as the slaughter of Ettor, Giovanitti and other labor champions was prevented. Every one must understand the personal responsibility, both to his or her own conscience and to the great cause of Labor, which none can venture to ignore. Defense Leagues must be formed, as we have formed them here in Los Angeles. Literature must be distributed and money collected systematically.

We urge you to be up and doing. We urge you, wherever you can, yourself to form a local league, and spread the propaganda from that center. Where that is impossible, unite yourself directly with us, and in any event write us for all information you may require. We will answer with all possible promptness. We will send you literature. We will do our utmost to help you.

There are fourteen cases. There will be numerous appeals. The work to be done on behalf of the accused will be heavy, and legal work in this country is expensive. Thousands of dollars must be collected, and it will take unremitting effort, for we are very poor. But the money will be spent in a truly noble cause, and we hope that out of the agitation these cases force on us there will come a better understanding of the great struggle for Land and Liberty now going on in Mexico.

Believing that you will lend us your earnest co-

operation and that, as the result of such co-operation, we shall be able to strike an effective blow for justice and human liberty.

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VICTOR CRAVELLO,
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ANARCHISM IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

BY P. RAMUS

IT has been said, and not unjustly, that before the proletariat will be able to triumph over the scourges of authority and exploitation, it will have first to overcome the ban of discipline and cast-iron centralism that is dominating the German working class under the form of "Socialism," viz., Social Democracy. Verily, this may not be far from the truth, because it is this more than anything else that is keeping the working people of the German-speaking countries back from rational and revolutionary activity upon the path of social reconstruction. Germany is at the helm of this reaction against the "real thing," a rigorous labor movement, wielding its economic power in the General Strike, Direct Action, Sabotage, and Anti-militarism, and thereby pushing ahead to the final goal of the modern emancipating movement, Communism —Anarchy.

In virtue of these facts the labor movement of Austria and Switzerland is hardly more than a tail of the Social Democracy of Germany, even more submissive, more bereft of all really Socialist activity and still more permeated by opportunism than the latter. And it stands to reason that a principle like Anarchism, with its entire negation of all rule and government of men by men, is

hated most bitterly not only by the governments but also by the political exploiters of the labor movement in the mentioned countries. They combine with their respective governments when it is a problem of downing the revolutionary principles of Anarchism. Thus we find them rejecting every principle of free speech when they direct their venomous efforts against our cause. The history of the labor movement in Germany and Austria—to a lesser extent in Switzerland—is a combined onslaught of government and politician against real revolutionary Socialism, as it is only embodied in Anarchism. In this strife, aided by the dense ignorance and under-development of the working class, State or parliamentarian "Socialism" and shallow "social reform" take the place of a really class-conscious labor movement in Germany, Austria, and the German-speaking parts of Switzerland.

Nevertheless, the flame of idealism and real Socialistic activities can not be wholly quenched. And thus there is also an Anarchistic movement in these countries which is even getting stronger as the flood of evolution and experience passes by. We shall attempt to give a short survey of the same.

GERMANY

The Anarchist movement is the strongest in this country in comparison to the other two. It has, over twenty years ago, developed out of a rigid Marxian wing of the effete Social Democracy which excluded the former for its too revolutionary proclivities. This was at the time of the so-called *Jungen* (Young Folks). Out of this group there emanated the Anarchistic movement of contemporary Germany.

Theoretically, the movement is based on the principles of Communist-Anarchism as enunciated by Kropotkin. In its tactics, it is thoroughly revolutionary with a leaning toward the old insurrection method of Bakunin. But the latter is superseded by its revolutionary syndicalist activities, which concentrate mostly upon a very vigorous and energetic anti-militarist propaganda, exceedingly necessary in military-ridden Germany, but also very dangerous. Thus the movement has to bring many sacrifices for anti-militarism. Every year numbers of good

comrades are disappearing behind the bars of jail and prison, to serve long sentences. Only recently, for instance, Rudolf Oestreich has been released after penal servitude of almost 4 years, for the reproduction of the Amsterdam resolution on anti-militarism in the organ *Der Freie Arbeiter* (The Free Worker).

The German Social Democracy has adopted the method of calling the General Strike, in its economic aspect, Anarchistic, while for the purposes of politics the General Strike is called a mass strike. The courts, therefore, have lately focussed their attention upon the General Strike as propagated by the Anarchists. Without an explicit anti-Anarchist law, our movement is yet under a harsh, exceptional law, by virtue of the free interpretation which courts give to the existing laws. For instance, the propaganda in favor of the General Strike is declared to be tantamount to an *incitement* to it and is punished by many months of imprisonment.

The stronghold of the Anarchist movement in Germany is organized in the *Anarchistische Föderation Deutschlands* which has during the last few years succeeded in gaining almost the whole of the movement. Another section is organized in the so-called *Socialistischer Bund,* the theoretical foundation of which is collectivism as perceived by Proudhon; in tactics this group aspires mainly toward the starting and creating of co-operative settlements and productive as well as consumptive co-operative associations, upon the basis of solidaric mutuality, but practical effort in this direction has not been made as yet.

Since the last five years the revolutionary syndicalist movement has developed considerably in Germany. It matured out of the most thoroughly organized Social Democratic unions, which this party had excluded for not wanting to adhere and merge themselves in the "pure and simple" trade union movement as led in Germany by renowned Social Democratic leaders, for instance, Legien, Sassenbach, Schlicke, Elm, etc. Being excluded, the revolutionary organization *Freie Vereinigung Deutscher Gewerkschaften* (Free Association of German Trade Unions), became a clear-cut revolutionary syndicalist organization, which rejects the ballot swindle and parliamentarian game in general, and propagates the

general strike, direct action and anti-militarism with the avowed aim of free communism. The movement is, happily enough, growing quite briskly, though bitterly fought by the "pure and simple" unions as well as the Social Democratic movement.

In point of literature, the above organization publishes two papers: *Einigkeit* (Unity) and *Pionier* (Pioneer). Both appear weekly, the former being the official and the latter the propagandist organ of the association. Besides these, the *Socialistischer Bund* is publishing a fortnightly periodical entitled *Der Socialist.* A very great fighter and leading agitation paper is the organ of the "Anarchist Federation," named *Der freie Arbeiter.* A small monthly leaflet paper appears in Hamburg, the *Kampf* (Struggle). I must not forget to mention a very laudable, solitary effort by the Anarchist poet Erich Mühsam, of Münich, who publishes there a literary monthly *Kain* (Cain) which is pervaded by a delightful spirit of Anarchism carried into literature, criticism, art and letters.

The foundation of the Anarchist as well as the syndicalist movement is ineradicably rooted in the soil of the social movement in Germany. As events go by and the decay of the Social Democracy into a purely middle class palliative movement will become clearer to the conscience of the German working class, our movement will be the legitimate heir of the revolutionary triumph of labor, its emancipation.

AUSTRIA

The following account does not comprise the Bohemian section of Anarchism in Austria. The movement of our Czech comrades is very strong and vigorous, characterized by a fully developed Anarchist philosophy, and possessing revolutionary labor activities and several organizations, mostly among the miners and weavers. In spite of their small number, the Czech comrades publish six journals of their own, all dealing with the various phases of our cause.

The German-speaking movement of Austria is by no means as thoroughly developed as the movement in Germany. The cause of this is the history and comparative

youth of the movement. It began as a radical Marxian faction of Social Democracy about thirty years ago; under Anarchism it understood the tactics of terrorism. All the heroism of these precursors of the Socialist cause in Austria could not stem the overwhelmingly crushing power of government. The latter was assisted by and did itself foster the so-called "moderate" Social Democratic faction which aimed solely at the harmless conquest of universal suffrage. Anarchism as a philosophy and practical application in the labor movement was, even in a purely theoretical way, severely prohibited by the Austrian government, which condition of affairs, on the other hand, drove many a well-meaning idealist of the "radical" Social Democratic Marxian wing into terrorism, then labeled by the government and the "moderate" wing as Anarchism. The absolute crushing out of free speech, assembly, and press for the "radical" faction, followed up by years of penal servitude for the slightest attempt to publish a mere leaflet, then at the same time unmolested evolution of the "moderate" wing, led to an absolute extermination of the former, and an equally absolute arena for the latter.

Until universal suffrage was conquered in 1907, Anarchism had no foothold whatsoever amongst the German-speaking workers of Austria, the same being enwrapped by the most blissful expectations of the possibility of parliamentarianism as promised and pictured to them by their Social Democratic leaders. The latter are in Austria through and through more "revisionist" than Bernstein and his followers in Germany have ever been. But now the great disillusion is setting in; the Austrian workers perceive that they have been hoodwinked by their political grafters.

At the middle and end of 1907 the Anarchist propaganda began again in the German language; there was then not even a remnant left of a former revolutionary movement. A fortnightly paper was launched by a few comrades, entitled *Wohlstand für Alle* (Welfare for All), and, lo and behold, it succeeded where former attempts under more auspicious conditions failed; it remained alone until to-day, and has now reached its sixth year of existence.

The struggle of our movement in Austria is very

severe. The workers themselves have been converted into conservatives by the Social Democracy. Still the Anarchist cause, through having strenuously to fight for its direct existence, is here to-day, it is penetrating into the ranks of the workers; it is attracting their attention by showing them that there is a higher and truer aim than Social Democracy, and is gradually winning valuable adherents and fighters for our ideal.

Except *Wohlstand für Alle*, an annual almanac for the whole of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, is published in Austria. It is called *Jahrbuch der freien Generation—Documente der Weltanschauung des Anarchismus—Sozialismus* (Annual of the Free Generation; Documents of the Philosophy of Anarchism—Socialism). The Austrian movement is also the base of supply of Anarchist literature to the movement of the other German-speaking countries.

The German-speaking Anarchist movement is communistic in its economic ideals and propagates the ideas of Kropotkin, Reclus, etc. It possesses various groups for theoretical agitation as also for syndicalist activity. Both are going hand in hand; the latter being a means for the former. Developing in a country of the densest Catholicism and of an all-powerful clergy, our movement is tinged with many tendencies of Tolstoy in his ruthless annihilation of churchism as contrary to the real "genesis" of Christianity.

A young Polish movement is developing in Galicia, where our comrades have succeeded in interesting private publishers to issue books by Kropotkin and have also published various pamphlets by the latter, Bakunin and others.

SWITZERLAND

Here, too, as usually when comparing the German with other races, we must unfortunately draw a sharp line between the French and Italian movements of Anarchism —communism and revolutionary syndicalism in the so-called "Roman" parts of Switzerland, and the weakness of the movement in the German parts. In the former the Anarchist principles of the time of the old "Internationale" have survived. And just as at that time, almost

forty years ago, the movement in the German part of Switzerland was mainly Social Democratic, adhering to the centralism of Marxism, so it has practically remained until to-day.

But here is another factor which must not be overlooked. The Swiss Social Democracy is very opportunistic, but—may be just therefore—not as intolerant as its sister parties in other countries. There are many professed Anarchists and syndicalists within the party and within its trade union movement, exercising there a very wholesome influence and giving much inspiration in the direction of Anarchism, federalism and economic direct action on the part of the workers.

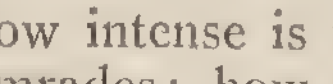
The great impediment to an independent, self-sustaining Anarchist movement in Switzerland is the rigid laws of expulsion, which by the way, are vigorously applied by Social Democratic police officials, rampant in Switzerland. The writer of these lines has himself been imprisoned and afterwards expelled by a Social Democratic Chief of Police in Zürich (Vogelsanger) for having become unpleasant by his agitation to some of the leaders of the Swiss Social Democracy. The party there is split in two factions, but both are equally opportunistic to last degree, which accounts for their not caring if even Anarchists, like Dr. Bauphacher, for instance, are members of the party; they are glad to have them remain.

Whenever German or Austrian Anarchists carried on an active propaganda in Switzerland, their efforts were crowned with great success. But soon the government, under the direct influence of Social Democracy, interfered by expelling the most active agitators. Somehow the German Swiss does not possess as yet himself the necessary oratorical and organizing ability for the cause of Anarchism; and the work of the few expelled fighters soon collapsed.

To-day the Swiss movement of German-speaking Anarchism has some literary circles; workers of our faith propagate our ideas in the Social Democratic trade unions —with great success for syndicalism, as the one-day General Strike action of July 12, 1912, proves.

Intellectually and literary, the Swiss movement derives its inspiration from Germany and Austria. But signs are multiplying that it will soon be on its own feet again.

The above survey does not claim to give a thorough monographic or psychological review of the Anarchist and revolutionary syndicalist movement in the named countries. It is intended only to give some glimpses and sketches of the work done for Anarchism amongst the German-speaking working class. That work is not in vain; it is progressing, and the time is not far when it will grow into the ripeness of its idealism and social-revolutionary realism.



INTELLECTUAL HELP FOR THE POLITICALS IN RUSSIA

A COMMITTEE was recently organized in Paris, whose main purpose is to satisfy the intellectual needs of the exiles and prisoners in Russia, by supplying them with books, magazines and newspapers in various languages.

Everyone knows how intense is the thirst for knowledge among our Comrades; how much light and joy books bring into the gray prisons and deserted villages of the vast and marshy forests in Siberia. The existing revolutionary Aid Societies are unable to pay much attention to these questions, as they are occupied with the material wants of the political exiles and prisoners. We have, therefore, found it imperative to form a special organization, whose main purpose is to satisfy the spiritual needs of the numerous victims of Russia.

The Committee appeals to all those interested to forward books, papers and magazines in various languages to Z. Steeglis, Secretary, 12 rue Daguerre, Paris (XIV), or to Rose Baron, Treasurer of the Relief Society for the Political Exiles in Siberia, 317-319 Second Avenue, New York City. Money will also be gratefully accepted, as postage expenses must be covered, and also books bought.

DORMOIS, Municipal Adviser;
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E. RUBANOWITCH,
BRAKE, Deputy.

THE VALUE OF CHASTITY

(*Conclusion*)

BY JOHN R. CORYELL

It may be said that we are either already in a state of civilization in which the old conditions no longer prevail, or that we are rapidly becoming enlightened. Students of social conditions have pointed out that there was never a time in the history of the world when human slavery was of so terrible and shocking a character as now. Men, women and children are driven into heart-breaking, body-destroying labor and cast aside to die miserably when they are used up. The difference is that we formerly used the word slavery and recognized a certain responsibility as belonging to the condition; whereas now we have discarded the word and with it all the responsibilities. Something of this sort has happened in the case of woman. She seems to have a sort of freedom; she even seems to belong to herself, but in truth she is still the product of, because still the believer in the old idea that she is the property of man.

To understand this it will be necessary to go back over the past and study the effects of her degrading slavery on woman and on man; for I strenuously insist that man is quite as much the victim of these conditions as woman. Perhaps, however, it will be better to look over the world as it is today to understand what chastity means for woman: for in the world as it is we can see man and woman in all the varying relations which they have held toward each other from the beginning of time; even from the condition of complete freedom in the low, almost beastial life of the most primitive races, to the condition which prevails in the most highly civilized of peoples.

In some parts of Africa men will give their wives to guests, or will sell them for a stated period to other men; but will kill their wives if they give themselves. You see how clearly chastity in those poor creatures does not belong to themselves, but to their husbands. That is in darkest Africa. Turn now to one of the most highly civilized countries in the world, Japan. A few years ago, when they were more civilized than they are now, since they have copied us, it was the custom for fathers

of wealth and social standing to put their daughters into tea houses to learn how to conduct themselves in society, and how to be most agreeable to their future husbands. And it was through prostitution that they learned a part of their lesson. A girl might not go to such a place of her own wish, but only when bidden by her father. And fathers would give their daughters to their male guests. But death was the portion of the married woman who was unchaste. You see it was not unchaste for a woman to give herself at the bidding of her owner, but it was instantly unchaste in her to give herself. There certainly is no need to multiply instances of this sort.

Another condition arose among the Mohammedans, where woman has reached almost the lowest level in her history. Chastity in men is not even pretended. It is true that it is a criminal offence for a man to rob his neighbor of a dog or a piece of money, or a chicken, or of his slave's chastity; but, as I have pointed out already, that law implies no expectation of chastity as a virtue in man. But chastity is imperative in woman, and death the penalty of unchastity. The singular state of things is this, however: Woman is held by the Mohammedans to have no soul. When she dies she is done for. But Mohammedan man expects to go to Paradise; and what do you think he expects to find there? A womanless heaven, because woman has no soul? Not at all, but a heaven in which he shall be waited on and ministered to by beautiful females, in whom the quality of chastity has been fixed by a device sufficiently curious in itself, but which serves remarkably to show how man regards the chastity of woman as his possession. The beautiful houris, as these heavenly women are called, constantly renew their virginity.

If there were time or any good purpose to be served I would instance many cases of the working of the idea that a woman's chastity is the man's property; but we are most concerned to know how we, of our civilization, are affected by this idea. I hope it will be borne in mind that the one great consequence of woman's slavery has been the wholly abnormal valuation placed upon her chastity; so that at least we have come to feel that chastity is the one attribute of paramount importance. Men insist upon this, but women have made it a fetish. I

might say that this was also the case in ancient Greece; and one of the results there was that the respectable women—that is the chaste women—grew to be such dull creatures that men maintained them only to bear them children; and sought out the unchaste women to pass their time with and to hold intellectual communion with. And it is credibly reported that just that condition exists today so far as our wealthy men are concerned. At any rate, Mrs. Grannis, who had the adultery law passed in New York, said at the Manhattan Liberal Club that she had had the law passed because so many men were guilty of that sort of thing.

Up to a certain age a girl child is treated practically as a boy is. She is allowed to play about the streets, to go to and from school freely, and in the main is not taught anything about sex, excepting in a vague way that boys are her natural enemies. For a while she may even play with boys. But presently there comes a very marked alteration in the treatment of her. Why? The great physical change has taken place in her, and she is now to be prepared for the market. The time is coming when some man may want her. She is to be made as attractive as possible; and if she have few or no physical graces, then she must be prepared for the market by the arts of the milliner and dressmaker. It is impressed on her from this time that she has no other means of livelihood that is throughly respectable, and that she must win some man to take care of her during the greater part of her life. Sufficient stress is laid on clothes and shape, but in season and out of season it is impressed upon the girl that neither physical beauty nor fine clothes will avail anything if she have not chastity. The man demands chastity in his wife. The girl must not forget that. Nor is it enough to be actually chaste; there must be a strong presumption that she is so. Hence she must not be with young men unless the conditions are such that an act of unchastity is impossible. Chaperons are for the purpose of insuring chastity.

And what is the attitude of the young man? Do you suppose that all the stress that is laid on chastity in the girl has been without its effect upon him? To him chastity is a prize. If he can get it without paying the price of his name and lifelong support for it, you may be sure

he will; and then he will despise the girl who has given it to him. He will have none of her. But if she has been properly taught, she will hold out against his wiles, even playing deliberately upon his passion, so that in despair of other means of obtaining her chastity he will marry her. There are very few girls who do not pass through this primary school, and then through the ordeal of proving their chastity.

Chastity! Chastity! It is to preserve the chastity of girls that they may not romp and play on the streets as heir animal spirits prompt them to do, but must walk demurely along, hardly glancing at any man. In our city boarding schools for girls there is a duenna who walks out with them when they are taken in solemn procession through the streets. And I presume she never draws a free breath as long as she is out with them; and is only happy when her charges and their valuable chastity are safe behind locked doors again.

Now I say that such chastity as this is not creditable to any one, but on the contrary is degrading and dishonoring, and is resulting in a physicial deterioration of woman that is most difficult to overcome. The woman is taught the abnormal value of her chastity and the relative unimportance of all else; and the result is that when she has turned over to her owner the goods for which he has bargained, she sinks into apathy, and physical deterioration begins at once. And why not? She has been taught nothing but to win her place as a wife; and she settles down into the complacent satisfaction of having nothing to do now but be chaste. She grows fat, she dislikes exercise more and more all the time, she no longer walks but waddles. She grows dull of mind, studying no longer to know anything of the thought of the world; she loses any shred of self-reliance she may have had; she is little better than a cow. She could not now be a companion to her husband if he wanted her to be, since she lacks the physical strength and activity to endure what is physically easy for him; and what with acquired dullness and a lack of knowledge of the common events of the world, she would be a drag on her husband if she had the energy and strength to go out with him. The result to the children that come of such a pair is that all the stamina

of the father is required to atone for the physical lack of the mother; and the race does not improve with the strides that would be possible if the mother were as robust as she might be if she trained for motherhood instead of for chastity.

Woman under existing conditions is no more than man's toy and playing. He has for her such a superior manner. You must have read some time ago that two keepers of restaurants on Broadway had said that they would permit women to smoke on New Year's Eve. One of them even said that if they were real good he would let them smoke at other times, too. Then in the *Journal* I read this in an editorial: "The *Evening Journal* does not welcome this change with pleasure or approval. It is a fact today, although it may not be so always, that the woman who will smoke in public is not a decent woman. She is a woman lacking in respect for her own mother, and for all older women. She is not a woman with whom respectable people would willingly associate." Could there be a better or more complete commentary on woman's position in society than this sort of condescension from restaurant keeper and editor? Neither of them explains why cigarette smoking is any more immoral in women than in men, but both assume that it is; though the restaurant keeper, making most of his money through women, will let them be devilish, while the editor solemnly disapproves. And alas! the wretched woman will take to cigarettes and wine as she has taken to the high-heeled shoes that twist her backbone and ruin her eyes, and to the corsets that save her the necessity of having muscles to hold her up, and to the hundred devices that are her heritage from ages of slavery.

I have said that women is now, as for ages she has been, man's toy and plaything. Her vaunted chastity is the fetish he has set up for her worship, and she has worshipped it so effectively that she has lost the sense of the peculiar function of her sex—motherhood. She is man's wife; she is nothing of her own. She does not seek to be anything of her own, even when she makes some of her spasmodic efforts at revolution. She is never demanding the only thing that will really uplift her—free motherhood; but with her head still reverently

at the feet of the idol chastity, which man set up for her, she merely asks for the things man has. She wants to smoke and drink strong liquors and vote. Not that I object to her smoking and drinking and voting if she cares for those things. But the real woman doesn't want things just because man has them; the real woman recognizes not the superiority of man by demanding the things he has, but recognizes that in herself she is different from man and neither inferior nor superior.

Woman is today physically and intellectually the inferior of man; but there is ample evidence to prove that she can be at least his equal in a few generations if she will but cast aside his standards of excellence, whether as to himself or to her, and strive to be her best self. Nothing can be finer than a strong, self-reliant woman, nothing more pitiful than the average woman. Why, it seems as if she tried with all her might to unfit herself for the joy of life. Take her from her fluffed out mass of hair, which has forever to be pinned into safety, her high collar—borrowed from the asinine man—her stiff corsets, her hampering skirts, down to her absurd high-heeled shoes, which prevent her from walking properly, and what a spectacle she would be to a free woman who thought only of living her life to get the most out of it, without regard to the traditions born of slavery.

It is nothing to me that woman has always been subordinate to man. I don't believe that whatever is is right. Indeed, whatever of good for ourselves we have ever achieved has been torn from nature, not taken with her acquiescence. Nature is not the friend of man, but rather his enemy. Man's whole progress has been along the lines of opposition to nature. It is not for the male human creature to say that woman is his because she always has been so. Nor should woman meekly bow her head and accept man as her master. If she wish to smoke, let her smoke, but for some better reason than that man does it. And if she wish to be chaste, at least let that chastity be her own and not man's; then alone will it be creditable to her; for now it is her disgrace and her infamy. And let her remember that a woman who belongs to herself cannot be unchaste.

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